

NTF WEEKLY – 3 OCTOBER 2017

Strangles Workshop at the Animal Health Trust – Thursday 5th October

Trainers are invited to join the AHT's Strangles Team, world renowned for their expertise and research, to share their latest news in helping to eradicate Strangles. Scheduled for Thursday 5th October from 12pm to 4pm (lunch included), it will be an afternoon of updates, discussion and networking with a question and answer panel session:

- A brief introduction to Strangles and *Streptococcus equi* – **Dr Andrew Waller, Head of Bacteriology**
- How does *Streptococcus equi* cause Strangles? – **Dr Romain Paillot, Head of Immunology**
- Preventing outbreaks of Strangles - **Dr Richard Newton, Director of Epidemiology and Surveillance**
- Vaccine design and the launch of our new BBSRC project – **Carmen Coral Dominguez-Medina, BBSRC Post-Doctoral Researcher**

RSVP Dr. Andrew Waller – andrew.waller@aht.org.uk / 01638 751000 Ext. 1207. Animal Health Trust Visitor's Centre, Lanwades Park, Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk. CB8 7UU

Lowering of the weights in jump handicaps

As part of the discussion on including horses rated +1lb or +2lb above the top of the rating band in jump handicaps, the BHA Racing Group has considered the Rule governing the raising and lowering of weights in Jump handicaps. It has now been agreed to mirror the way in which the rule operates on the Flat with regard to the lowering of weights when all declared runners are above 9st 2lb.

This has been operating successfully on the Flat for some years now and was introduced principally to remove the incidents of horses carrying unnecessarily high weights in races where all declared runners are above an agreed weight.

Rule (F)45.5 is being changed to bring those same benefits to Jump racing. After consulting the NTF, the BHA has agreed that where all declared runners are above 11st, the weights should be lowered to 11st accordingly.

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Changes in the pipeline for Hunter Chase eligibility

Another change for jump racing agreed at the Racing Group is the eligibility for Hunter Chases. This has followed a long debate over several meetings with the NTF not supporting the fourth of these recommendations:

1. Licensed Trainers can continue to run horses in Hunter Chases
2. Cessation of the November to December blackout period for horses running in the following year's Hunter Chases
3. No change to the Hunter Chase eligibility based on previous race performance
4. Horses that run under the care of a licensed trainer in a Hunter Chase may run only in a Hunter Chase for the remainder of the Hunter Chase season (i.e. up to the Stratford HC meeting.)

The NTF's concern was that the number of horses being sent Hunter Chasing from licensed yards may decrease significantly as a result of this change. The BHA's opinion was that if the other three recommendations were implemented, particularly the cessation of the November and December blackout period, then the whole approach to Hunter Chasing eligibility would be relaxed to a point where a large proportion of horses would be able to dip in and out of Hunter Chasing, something that would be undesirable.

The Racing Group will review the impact of the changes, including the number of horses being sent Hunter Chasing from licensed yards, at the end of the first season.

Mobile training facility a hit with trainers

The British Racing School is once again offering trainers the opportunity to benefit from 'in-yard' training with the Mobile Training Facility – a vehicle with an electric racehorse simulator plus the option to video and review. This can be used as a discreet activity or as part of riding work training undertaken by a jockey coach involving tuition, riding a piece of work and a video review. Over twenty trainers have previously made use of this training and it has been very well received. Trainers to have used the mobile unit report an extremely positive outcome for their staff. It often acts as a beneficial team building exercise.

Any trainer wishing to book training should contact Di Farrell-Thomas (di.farrell-thomas@brs.org.uk). Where possible the BRS would wish to deliver a batch of training in one area to avoid long distance travel to a single trainer so coordination between trainers to agree similar dates would be appreciated.

Data Protection - Over enthusiastic salesman

A trainer has informed us about a company called Unidoc Solutions, whose salesman has been harassing the trainer about purchasing software to comply with new data protection legislations taking effect in May 2018.

The NTF will be providing members with advice about the General Data Protection Regulations and at this point we don't believe you require any additional software for compliance.

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BHA integrity survey to produce benchmark of perceptions

The BHA has launched its first annual integrity survey, with the objective of producing a robust benchmark of stakeholder perceptions of the BHA and their level of confidence in its regulatory function.

The purpose of the BHA's integrity function is to ensure that the public and participants can be confident that British racing is run fairly and in accordance with the rules, that crime and corruption is deterred, prevented or penalised, and that there is a level playing field for all competitors.

The survey will establish to what extent the racing industry's stakeholders and participants have confidence that these objectives are being delivered – and where the main integrity threats are perceived to exist – in order to provide clear insight and evidence on their views on the BHA's integrity work, and areas for improvement in the future.

The survey will be sent to a wide-ranging sample of 5,000 individuals who represent racing's main stakeholder bodies, jockeys, trainers, owners, racegoers, breeders, racecourses, bettors and the media.

Auto enrolment rules on opting out

During inspections carried out by The Pension Regulator across the country, there have been a number of instances where employers had agreed to opt staff out of a workplace pension before they had been enrolled.

If employers do this, they are not complying with their duties in the correct way and may risk a fine if they appear to be making the decision to opt out on behalf of their staff. Eligible staff must be enrolled first – they can only opt out (if they wish to) after being enrolled.

Employers need to follow all the steps in the TPR Duties Checker, including setting up a pension scheme, putting eligible staff into it and writing to them, before they can choose whether to stay in or opt out. See the [TPR website](#) for more information on the key steps to follow.

Regulation deadlines

- Pension auto enrolment staging dates
 - **Up to February 2018** for businesses started since April 2012
- **By the end of 2017** – original Racing Admin website will close.
- **1st October 2017** – Novice Chase recommendations come into effect. [More...](#)
- **2nd October 2017** – 3% increase in racing industry minimum pay rates. [More...](#)
- **1st January 2018** – minimum ratings applies to all non-two year old Group 1 and non-novice Grade 1 races.

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NTF meeting dates

South West	Monday 30th October	Taunton
West Midland and Wales	Monday 6 th November	Warwick Racecourse
North	Thursday 9 th November	Ripon Racecourse
East	Tuesday 14 th November	Newmarket
South East	Thursday 16 th November	Epsom Racecourse
Central South	tbc	Newbury Racecourse
Committees and Council	Tuesday 5 th December	London

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